

Mr. Henderson in the Character of Hamlet.



Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak.

Act 1. Scene 2.

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H A M L E T,
PRINCE OF DENMARK.

A
T R A G E D Y.

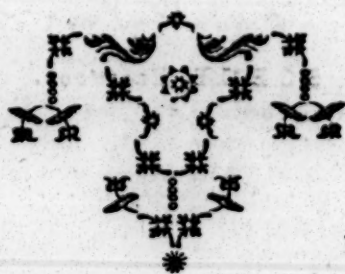
As it is Acted at the

T H E A T R E S - R O Y A L

I N

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

Written by S H A K E S P E A R E.



Shakspere (W) K

L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXXIX.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

King.
HAMLET.
POLONIUS.
HORATIO.
LAERTES.
ROSENCRAUS.
GUILDENSTERN.



OSTRICK.
MARCELLUS.
BERNARDO.
FRANCISCO.
Player King.
Ghost.
Two Grave-diggers.

W O M E N.

Queen.
OPHELIA.

||
Player Queen.
Ladies attending on the Queen.

SCENE, ELSEINOR.

H A M L E T.

A C T I.

SCENE, an open Place before the Palace.

Enter Bernardo and Francisco, two Centinels.

Ber. **W**HO's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter And I am sick at heart. [cold,

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night. If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus, the rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! who's

Hor. Friends to this ground. [there?

Mar. And liege-men to the Dane.

Fran. Good night.

Mar. Farewel, honest soldier. Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo has my place: good night. [Exit Francisco.

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say, what is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio—welcome, good Marcellus.

Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again, to-

Ber. I have seen nothing. [night?

Mar. Horatio says 'tis but a phantasy, And will not let belief take hold of him, Touching the dreadful sight, twice seen of us: Therefore I have entreated him, along With us, to watch the minutes of this night, That, if again this apparition come, He may approve our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. 'Twill not appear.

Ber. Come, let us once again assail your ears, That are so fortified against our story, What we have two nights seen.

Hor. Well, let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,

When yon same star, that's westward from the pole, Had made his course to enlighten that part of heav'n Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,

The bell then beating one—

Mar. Peace, break thee off—

Enter Ghost.

Look, where it comes again.

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio. [dead.

Ber. Looks it not like the king?

Hor. Most like: it startles me with fear and

Ber. It would be spoke to. [wonder.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of Together with that fair and warlike form, [night, In which the majesty of buried Denmark Did sometimes march? I charge thee speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay, speak, speak: I charge thee speak.

[Exit Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble and look Is not this something more than phantasy? [pale, What think you of it?

Hor. I could not this believe, Without the sensible and true avouch Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on, When th'ambitious Norway he combated.

Mar. Thus twice before, and just at the same hour,

With martial stalk, hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know But in the scope of mine opinion, [not, This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Pray tell me, he that knows, Why this same strict and most observant watch So nightly toils the subjects of the land? And makes the night joint-labourer with the day? Who is't that can inform me?

Hor. That can I; our last king, Whose image e'en but now appear'd to us, Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway, Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by seal'd compact, Well ratify'd by law and heraldry, Did forfeit (with his life) all these his lands, Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror— Now, Sir, young Fortinbras, Of unimproved mettle hot and full, Hath, in the skirts of Norway, here and there, Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,

To recover those aforesaid lands,
So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations.

Ber. I think it is no other, but even so.

Enter Ghost again.

Hor. But soft! behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, tho' it blast me. Stay, illusion!

[Spreading his arms.]

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me—If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me.

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily foreknowing may avoid, O speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life,
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

[Cock crows.]

Speak of it. Stay and speak—Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. 'Tis gone—

[Exit Ghost.]

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
To offer it the shew of violence;
It is ever, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill sounding throat,
Awake the god of day: and at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine.

But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill;
Break we our watch up, and by my advice
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet: perhaps.

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

SCENE II. The Palace.

*Enter King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes,
Gentlemen, and Guards.*

King. Tho' yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore, our sometime sister, now our queen,
Th' imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,
Taken to wife. Nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along.

But now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit. What is't, Laertes?

Laer. My dear lord,

Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence, tho' willingly I came to Denmark,
To shew my duty in your coronation,
Yet now I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again towards France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and favour.

King. Have you your father's leave? what says
Polonius?

Hor. He hath, my lord, by labour some petition;
Wrung from me my slow leave; and at the last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will.—

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it, that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' th' sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nightly colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark:

Do not, for ever, with thy veiled lids,
Seek for thy noble father in the dust;
Thou know'st 'tis common, all that live must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, Madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, Madam! Nay, it is; I know not
seems.

'Tis not alone this mourning suit, good mother,
Together with all forms, modes, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within, which passeth shew;
These but the trappings, and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:
But you must know, your father lost a father,
That father his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term,
To do obsequious sorrow. But to persevere
In obstinate condolement, does express
An impious stubbornness.

We pray you, throw to earth
This unavailing woe, and think of us,
As of a father; and let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Ham-
let;

I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, Madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet,
Sits smiling at my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell it.

[Exeunt.]

Manet Hamlet.

Ham. O that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-murder!
How weary, stale, and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in na-
ture

Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead? nay, not so much! not
So excellent a king!

[two—]

So loving to my mother,
That he permitted not the winds of heav'n
To visit her face too roughly!
Why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; yet within a month!—
Let me not think—frailty, thy name is woman!
A little month!—or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears—she—
Married with mine uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules.

It is not, nor it cannot come to good.

But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

Enter Horatio, Bernardo, and Marcellus.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I'm glad to see you well:

Horatio, or I do forget myself.

[Ever.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you:

And what makes you from Wittenberg, Horatio? Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord!

Ham. I'm very glad to see you; good morning, Sir. But what, in faith, makes you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;

Nor shall you do my ear that violence,

To be a witness of your own report

Against yourself. I know you are no truant;

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pr'ythee do not mock me, fellow student;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio; the funeral bakh'd meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my direst foe in heav'n,

Ere I had seen that day, Horatio!

My father—methinks I see my father.

Hor. Where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. The king your father!

Ham. The king my father!

Hor. Defer your admiration, for a while,

With an attentive ear; till I deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This wonder to you.

Ham. Pray let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,

Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,

In the dead waste and middle of the night,

Been thus encounter'd: a figure like your father,

Arm'd at all points exactly *cap à pe*,

Appears before them, and with solemn march

Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd

Within their rapier's length; whilst they (distill'd

Almost to jelly with their fear)

Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me

In dreadful secrecy impart they did,

And I with them the third night kept the watch;

Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,

Form of the thing, each word made true and good,

The apparition comes.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we

Ham. Did you not speak to it? [watch'd.

Hor. My lord, I did;

But answer made it none: yet once methought

It lifted up it's head, and did address

Itself to motion, like as it would speak:

But even then the morning-cock crew loud;

And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,

And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange!

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true:

And we did think it then our duty

To let you know it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, Sirs, but this troubles me: Hold you the watch to-night?

Both. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

Both. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Both. From head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O yes, my lord, he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A count'nance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there!

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like; staid it long?

Hor. While one with mod'rate haste might tell

All. Longer, longer.

[a hundred.

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grissly?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life, A sable silver'd.

Ham. I'll watch to-night; perchance 'twill walk

Hor. I warrant you it will. [again.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,

I'll speak to it, tho' hell itself should gape,

And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,

If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,

Let it be treble in your silence still:

And whatsoever else may hap to-night,

Give it an understanding, but no tongue;

I will requite your loves. So fare you well.

Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,

I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour. [Exeunt.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;

I doubt some foul play; would the night were come!

Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,

Tho' all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [Exit.

Enter Laertes and Ophelia.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd; farewell.

And, sister, as the wind permits, pray

Let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favours,

Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,

A violet in the youth and prime of nature,

Forward, not permanent; tho' sweet, not lasting;

The perfume of a minute.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:

He may not, as inferior persons do,

Carve for himself; for on his choice depends

The sanity and health of this whole state.

Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,

If with too credulous ear you hear his passion.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister:

The chariest maid is prodigal enough,

If she unmask her beauty to the moon.

Oph. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep

About my heart: but, good my brother,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,

Shew me the steep and thorny way to heaven;

Whilst, like a careless libertine,

Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads.

Laer. Oh, fear me not.

I stay too long; but here my father comes.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! get abroad, for shame,
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are staid for.

Laer. Most humbly I do take my leave, my lord.
Farewel, Ophelia, and remember well
What I have said to you.

Opb. 'Tis in my mem'ry lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewel. *[Exit Laertes.]*

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he said to you?

Opb. So please you, something touching the
Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought!

'Tis told me he hath very oft of late
Giv'n private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so (as so 'tis put on me,

And that in way of caution) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Opb. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection! pugh! you speak like a green girl,
Unfitted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Opb. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you; think yourself a
baby,

That you have ta'en these tenders for your pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or you'll tender me a fool.

Opb. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion, you may call it: go to, go to.

Opb. And hath giv'n countenance to his speech,
my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows. This is for all:

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet:
Look to't, I charge you; come your way.

Opb. I shall obey, my lord. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III. *The Platform before the Palace.*

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. I heard it not: then it draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held is wont to walk.

[Trumpets a tune.]

—What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The king doth wake, to-night, and take
his rouse;

And as he takes his draught of rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus proclaim
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry is't:

But, to my mind, tho' I am native here,
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd;
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell;
Be thy intent wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee. I'll cail thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: Oh! answer me,
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy bones, hears'd in canoniz'd earth,
Have burst their cearments? Why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly interr'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again? What may this mean?
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel,
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon;
Making night hideous, and us fools of nature
So horribly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do!
[Ghost beckons Hamlet.]

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it;
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground;
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means. *[Holding Hamlet.]*

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I value not my life;

And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?

It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you tow'rd the flood, my
lord;

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
And there assume some other, horrid form,
And draw you into madness?

Ham. It waves me still:

Go on, I'll follow thee—

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hand.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty art'ry in this body,
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve:

Still am I call'd?—unhand me, gentlemen—
[Breaking from them.]

By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me—
I say, away—Go on—I'll follow thee.

[Exit Ghost and Hamlet; Horatio and Marcellus retiring on the opposite side.]

Enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go.

Ghost. Mark me. *[no farther.]*

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor Ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,

Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. Lift, lift, O lift!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love——

Ham. O, Heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder! [der.]

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know't; that I with wings as
As meditation, or the thoughts of love, [swift]
May fly to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt—Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that, sleeping in my garden,
A serpent stung me: so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd; for know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul! my uncle?

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast.
Won to his shameful lust

The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O, Hamlet, what a falling off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine——

But soft, methinks I scent the morning air——
Brief let me be: Sleeping within my garden,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a phial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effects
Hold such an enmity with blood of man,
That swift as quicksilver it courses thro'
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
So did it mine.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once bereft;
Cut off e'en in the blossom of my sin,
Unhousel'd, unanointed, unanneal'd;
No reck'ning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.

Ham. O horrible! horrible! most horrible!

Ghost. If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury, and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul design
Against thy mother aught; leave her to Heav'n,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To goad and sting her. Fare thee well, at once!
The glow-worm shows the morning to be near,
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire.
Farewel; remember me. [Exit.]

Ham. O hold, my heart——

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me strongly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe; remember thee——
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial, fond records,
All register of books, all forms and pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by Heav'n!
O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables——meet it is I should set down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I'm sure he may be so in Denmark.

[Writing.]

—So, uncle, there you are——now to my word:

It is, farewell, remember me.

I have sworn it.

Hor. [Within.] My lord, my lord!

Mar. [Within.] Lord Hamlet!

Hor. [Within.] Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it.

Hor. [Within.] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy, come, bird, come.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No, you'll reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord.

Ham. How say you then, would heart of man
But you'll be secret? [once think it?—]

Both. As death, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Den-
But he's an arrant knave. [mark,

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from
To tell us this. [the grave,

Ham. Why, right; you're in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands, and part:
You as your business and desires shall point,
(For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is)—and for my poor part,
I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and windy words, my
lord.

Ham. I'm sorry they offend you, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by St. Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence, too. Touching this vision,
here——

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master't as you may: and now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Grant me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord?

Ham. Never make known what you have seen,

Both. My lord, we will not. [to-night.

Ham. Nay, but swear't.

Hor. In faith, my lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen——
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [Below.] Swear.

Hor. O, day and night! but this is wond'rous
strange.

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heav'n and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy. But come,
Here, as before. Never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
(As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on)
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or head thus shak'd,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As——well——we know——or, we could, an if we
would——

Or such ambiguous giving out, denote
That you know aught of me. This do ye swear,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you!

Gloft. Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit.—So, gentle—
With all my love I do commend me to you; [men,
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is,
May do t'express his love and friendship to you,
Shall never fail: Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint: oh, cursed spight,
That ever I was born to set it right! [*Exeunt.*



A C T II.

SCENE I. *An Apartment in Polonius's House.*

Enter Ophelia meeting Polonius.

Pol. **H**OW now, Ophelia, what's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord! I have been

Pol. With what? [*so affrighted—*

Oph. My lord, as I was reading in my closet,
Prince Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other—
Thus he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love!

Oph. My lord, I do not know,
But truly I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard:
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it: that done, he lets me go,
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out of doors he went, without their help,
And to the last bended their light on me.

Pol. This is the very extasy of love—
Have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did com-
I did repel his letters, and deny'd [*mand,*
His accets to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad—
Come, go with me to the king,
This must be known;
Come, come away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The Palace.*

Enter King, Queen, Rosencraus, and Guildenstern.

King. Welcome, good Rosencraus and Guilden-
Besides that we did long to see you, [*stern.*
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something you have heard
Of Hamlet's transformations; what it should be,
More than his father's death,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time, so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather
If aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of
And sure I am, two men are not living [*you,*
To whom he more adheres: if it will please you,
So to employ your time with us a while,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties

Might, by the sov'reign power you have o'er us,
Put your dread pleasure more into command,
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves in the full bent,
To lay our service freely at your feet.

King. Thanks, Rosencraus, and gentle Guilden-

Queen. I do beseech you instantly to visit [*stern.*
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

[*Exeunt Ros. and Guild.*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Now I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it had us'd to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O speak of that, that I do long to hear.

Pol. My liege and Madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, as brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief: your noble son is mad,
Mad call I it! for to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true; a foolish figure,
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause;
Thus it remains; and the remainder thus. Consider,
I have a daughter; have, while she is mine,
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath giv'n me this: Now gather and surmise.

[*Reads.*

*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beau-
tified Ophelia: that's an ill phrase, a vile phrase;
beautified is a vile phrase; but you shall hear—
Thus in her excellent white bosom, these, &c.*

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good Madam, stay awhile, I will be faithful.
*Doubt thou the stars are fire,
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.*

*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have
not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best,
O most best, believe it: Adieu. Thine evermore, most
dear lady, while this machine is to him, Hamlet.
This in obedience hath my daughter shewn me,
And more concerning his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place.*

King. But how hath she receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so; but what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen, here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight.
No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I charg'd:
Lord Hamlet is a prince above thy sphere,
This must not be: and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens;
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;

And he, repelled, a short tale to make,
Fell to a sadness, then into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and by this declension,
Into the madness wherein he now raves,
And all we wait for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time (I'd fain know
That I have positively said that 'tis so, [that]
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise;
[Pointing to his head and body.]

If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it farther?

Pol. Sometimes he walks, for hours together,
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him.
So please your majesty to hide yourself
Behind the arras, then
Mark the encounter; if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assitant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter Hamlet reading.

Queen. But look, where sadly the poor wretch
comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you both, away.

[Exeunt King and Queen.]

I'll board him presently.
How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent well.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were as honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, Sir, to be honest, as this world goes,
Is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That is very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breeds maggots in a dead
dog, being a god, kissing carrion—Have you a
daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' th' sun! Conception
is a blessing; but not as your daughter may con-
ceive. Friend, look to't.

Pol. Still harping on my daughter! yet he knew
[Aside.] me not at first, but said I was a fishmonger;
he is far gone; and truly in my youth I suffered
much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak
to him again. What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slander, Sir; for the satirical rogue says
here, that old men have grey beards, that their
faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick am-
ber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a most
plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams;
all which, Sir, though I most potently believe, yet
I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for
you yourself, Sir, shall grow old, as I am, if, like a
crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method
in't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave.

Pol. Marry, that's out of the air, indeed! How

pregnant his replies are! a happiness that often
madness hits on. My lord; I will take my leave.

Ham. You cannot take from me any thing that
I would more willingly part withal, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter Guildenstern and Rosencraus.

Pol. You go to seek lord Hamlet, there he is.

Ros. Save you, Sir. [Exit Pol.]

Guild. My honoured lord.

Ros. My dear lord.

Ham. My excellent good friends! how dost thou,
Guildenstern? ah, Rosencraus! good lads, how do
you both? Well, what news?

Ros. None, my lord, but the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near; sure your news is
not true? But, in the beaten way of friendship,
what makes you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in
thanks: but I thank you. Were you not sent for?
Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation?
Come, come, deal justly with me: nay, speak.

Guild. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Any thing, but to the purpose. You
were sent for; there is a kind of confession in your
looks, which your modesties have not craft enough
to colour. I know the good king and queen have
sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. Nay, that you must teach me; but let me
conjure you, by the rights of our fellowships, by
the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of
our love, and by what more dear a better proposer
could charge you withal; be even and direct with
me, whether you were sent for, or no.

Ros. What say you?

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you; if you
love me, hold not off.

Guild. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipa-
tion prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the
king and queen moults no feather: I have, of late,
but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, fore-
gone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so
heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame
the earth seems to me a steril promontory; this
most excellent canopy the air, this majestic roof
fretted with golden fire, why, it appears nothing to
me, but a foul and pestilent congregation of vap-
ours. What a piece of work is man! how noble
in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and
moving how express and admirable! in action how
like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the
beauty of the world, the paragon of animals! And yet to me what is this quintessence of dust?
Man delights not me—nor woman neither; though
by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my
thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said,
Man delights not me?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in
man, what lenten entertainment the players shall
receive from you: we met with them on the way,
and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome;
his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adven-
turous knight shall use his foil and target; the
lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man
shall end his part in peace; and the lady shall speak
her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.
What players are they?

Rof. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? Their residence both in reputation and profit was better both ways. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Rof. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. It is not very strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mouths at him, while my father lived, now give twenty, forty, fifty, nay, a hundred ducats apiece, for his picture in little: there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

Guil. Shall we call the players, my lord?

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinoor: your hands; th' appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a heronshaw.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen.

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern and Rosencrans, that great baby that you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Rof. Haply he is the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I prophesy that he comes to tell me of the players; mark it: you say right, Sir, a Monday morning, 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you; when Roscius was an actor in Rome—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz.

Pol. Upon mine honour—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral; scene unividable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of wit and liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephtha, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why, one fair daughter, and no more; the which he loved passing well.

Pol. Still on my daughter! *[Aside.]*

Ham. Am not I i' th' right, old Jephtha?

Pol. If you call me Jephtha, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. Nay, what follows then, my lord?

Ham. Why as by lot, God wot, and then you know, it came to pass, as most like it was: the first row of the rubrick will shew you more; for look where my abridgment comes.

Enter Players.

—You are welcome, masters. O, my old friend! why, thy face is valanced, since I saw thee last; com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! marry, your ladyship, is grown nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopin: I wish your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome; we'll e'en to't like friendly falconers, fly at any thing we see: we'll have a speech straight; come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

Play. What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but

it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the multitude. One speech in't I chiefly loved, 'twas Æneas's tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line, let me see, let me see—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast—
Beast! no, that's not it, yet it begins with Pyrrhus.
The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose fable arm,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,
Old grandfire Priam seeks.

Pol. My lord, well spoken, with good accent, and good discretion.

Ham. So proceed you.

Play. Anon he finds him,
Striking too short at Greeks. His antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command; unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerv'd father falls.

But as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heav'ns, the rack stand still,
The bold wind speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death; anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work:
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.

Out, out, thou strumpet fortune!

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.
Pr'ythee, say on; he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on, and come to Hecuba.

Play. But who, alas! had seen the mobled

Ham. The mobled queen? *[queen—]*

Pol. That's good.

Play. Run barefoot, up and down, threatening the
A clout upon that head *[flames;]*
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
A blanket in th' alarm of fear caught up:
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounced?

Pol. Look whether he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes. Pr'ythee no more.

Ham. 'Tis well, I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?—Do you hear? let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time: after your death, you were better to have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Much better; use every man, Sir, according to his desert, and who shall escape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, Sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends; we'll have a play to-morrow. Dost thou hear me, old friend? My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinoor.

Rof. Farewel, my lord. *[Exit Rof. and Guild.]*

Ham. Can you play the murder of Gonzago?

[To Player.]

Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night; you could

for need study a speech of some dozen lines, which I would set down and insert—could you not?

Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well; follow that lord, and look you mock him not. [Exit all but Hamlet.]

O what a wretch and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That from her working all the visage warm'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit; and all for nothing—
For Hecuba?

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? what would he do,
Had he the motive and the ground for passion
That I have? he would drown the stage with tears,
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears:
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal.

[Lain!] Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a cursing, like a very drab, a scullion; fie upon't! foh!

About my brain! Hum! I have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions:
For murder, tho' it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father,
Before my uncle. I'll observe his looks,
I'll tent him to the quick; if he look pale,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen,
May be a devil, and the devil may have power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps,
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me, to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this; the play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[Exit.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencraus, Guildenstern, Gentlemen, and Guards.

King. AND can you by no drift of conference
Get from him why he puts on this confusion?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause, he will by no means speak.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most civilly.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Unapt to question; but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you invite him to any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'ertook on the way; of these we told him,
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it; they're about the court,

And (as I think) they have already orders
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true;

And he beseech'd me to intreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart;
And it doth much content me,

To hear him so inclin'd:

Good gentlemen, give him a farther edge,
And urge him to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord. [Exit Ros. and Guil.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may meet
Ophelia here: her father and myself
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing and unseen,
We may of their encounter judge.

Queen. I shall obey you:—
And for my part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Opb. Madam, I wish it may. [Exit Queen.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here, whilst we
(If so your majesty shall please) retire conceal'd.

Opb. I hear him coming: retire, my lord.

[Exit King and Pol.]

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be? that is the question.
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die, to sleep—
No more; and by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand nat'ral shocks
That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep—
To sleep? perchance, to dream: ay, there's the rub?
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause—There's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To groan and sweat under a weary life?
But that the dread of something after death,
(That undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns) puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the healthful face of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now,
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.
Opb. Good my lord, how do you?
Ham. I humbly thank you, well.
Opb. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have long'd to re-deliver;
Pray you now receive them.
Ham. No, not I; I never gave you aught.
Opb. My honour'd lord, you know right well
you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? Their residence both in reputation and profit was better both ways. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

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Pol. Upon mine honour—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral; scene unividable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of wit and liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephtha, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why, one fair daughter, and no more; the which he loved passing well.

Pol. Still on my daughter! *[Aside.]*

Ham. Am not I i' th' right, old Jephtha?

Pol. If you call me Jephtha, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. Nay, what follows then, my lord?

Ham. Why as by lot, God wot, and then you know, it came to pass, as most like it was: the first row of the rubrick will shew you more; for look where my abridgment comes.

Enter Players.

—You are welcome, masters. O, my old friend! why, thy face is valanced, since I saw thee last; com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! marry, your ladyship, is grown nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopin: I wish your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome; we'll e'en to't like friendly falconers, fly at any thing we see: we'll have a speech straight; come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

Play. What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but

it was never acted; or, if 'twas, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the multitude. One speech in't I chiefly loved, 'twas Æneas's tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line, let me see, let me see—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast—
Beast! no, that's not it, yet it begins with Pyrrhus.
The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arm,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,
Old grandfire Priam seeks.

Pol. My lord, well spoken, with good accent, and good discretion.

Ham. So proceed you.

Play. Anon he finds him,
Striking too short at Greeks. His antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command; unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerv'd father falls.

But as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heav'ns, the rack stand still,
The bold wind speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death; anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work:
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—

Out, out, thou strumpet fortune!

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.
Pr'ythee, say on; he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on, and come to Hecuba.

Play. But who, alas! had seen the mobled

Ham. The mobled queen? *[queen—]*

Pol. That's good.

Play. Run barefoot, up and down, threatening the
A clout upon that head *[flames;]*
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
A blanket in th' alarm of fear caught up:
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounced?

Pol. Look whether he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes. Pr'ythee no more.

Ham. 'Tis well, I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?—Do you hear? let them be well used; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time: after your death, you were better to have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Much better; use every man, Sir, according to his desert, and who shall escape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, Sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends; we'll have a play to-morrow. Dost thou hear me, old friend? My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinoor.

Ros. Farewel, my lord. *[Exit Ros. and Guild.]*

Ham. Can you play the murder of Gonzago?

[To Player.]

Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night; you could

for need study a speech of some dozen lines, which I would set down and insert—could you not?

Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well; follow that lord, and look you mock him not. [Exeunt all but Hamlet.]

O what a wretch and peasant slave am I! Is it not monstrous that this player here, But in a fiction, in a dream of passion, Could force his soul so to his own conceit, That from her working all the visage warm'd, Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect, A broken voice, and his whole function suiting With forms to his conceit; and all for nothing—For Hecuba?

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, That he should weep for her? what would he do, Had he the motive and the ground for passion That I have? he would drown the stage with tears, Make mad the guilty, and appal the free, Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed The very faculties of eyes and ears: But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall To make oppression bitter, or ere this I should have fatted all the region kites With this slave's offal.

[Lain!]

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain! Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave, That I, the son of a dear father murder'd, Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell, Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words, And fall a cursing, like a very drab, a scullion; fie upon't! foh!

About my brain! Hum! I have heard, That guilty creatures, sitting at a play, Have, by the very cunning of the scene, Been struck so to the soul, that presently They have proclaim'd their malefactions: For murder, tho' it have no tongue, will speak With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players Play something like the murder of my father, Before my uncle. I'll observe his looks, I'll tent him to the quick; if he look pale, I know my course. The spirit that I have seen, May be a devil, and the devil may have power To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps, Out of my weakness, and my melancholy, As he is very potent with such spirits, Abuses me, to damn me. I'll have grounds More relative than this; the play's the thing, Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[Exit.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencraus, Guildenstern, Gentlemen, and Guards.

King. AND can you by no drift of conference Get from him why he puts on this confusion?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted; But from what cause, he will by no means speak.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most civilly.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Unapt to question; but of our demands Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you invite him to any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players We o'ertook on the way; of these we told him, And there did seem in him a kind of joy To hear of it; they're about the court,

And (as I think) they have already orders This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true;

And he beseech'd me to intreat your majesties To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; And it doth much content me, To hear him so inclin'd:

Good gentlemen, give him a farther edge, And urge him to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord. [Exeunt Ros. and Guil.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too; For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither, That he, as 'twere by accident, may meet Ophelia here: her father and myself Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing and unseen, We may of their encounter judge.

Queen. I shall obey you:— And for my part, Ophelia, I do wish That your good beauties be the happy cause Of Hamlet's wildness: so I hope your virtues Will bring him to his wonted way again, To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [Exit Queen.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here, whilst we (If so your majesty shall please) retire conceal'd.

Oph. I hear him coming: retire, my lord.

[Exeunt King and Pol.]

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be? that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer The stings and arrows of outrageous fortune; Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing end them? To die, to sleep— No more; and by a sleep, to say we end The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep— To sleep? perchance, to dream: ay, there's the rub? For in that sleep of death what dreams may come, When we have shuffled off this mortal coil, Must give us pause—There's the respect, That makes calamity of so long life: For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay, The insolence of office, and the spurns That patient merit of the unworthy takes, When he himself might his quietus make With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear, To groan and sweat under a weary life? But that the dread of something after death, (That undiscover'd country, from whose bourn No traveller returns) puzzles the will; And makes us rather bear those ills we have, Than fly to others that we know not of. Thus conscience does make cowards of us all; And thus the healthful face of resolution Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought; And enterprises of great pith and moment, With this regard their currents turn awry, And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now, The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord, how do you?

Ham. I humbly thank you, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours, That I have long'd to re-deliver; Pray you now receive them.

Ham. No, not I; I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well you did,

And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd

As made these things more rich: the perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha, are you honest?

Opb. My lord!

Ham. Are you fair?

Opb. What means your lordship?

Ham. That, if you be honest and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Opb. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce, than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is, to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into it's likeness: this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives proof. I did love you once.

Opb. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believ'd me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I lov'd you not.

Opb. I was the more deceiv'd.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why should'st thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my back, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in: what should such fellows, as I, do crawling between earth and heaven? we are arrant knaves, believe none of us; go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Opb. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, That he may play the fool no where but in's own Fawcett.

Opb. O help him, you sweet heav'ns!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not scape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery. Or if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them; to a nunnery go.

Opb. Heav'nly powers restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings, well enough: nature hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, and you amble, and you lisp, you nickname heav'n's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to; I'll no more on't, it hath made me mad: I say, we will have no more marriages; those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go, go, go.

[Exit.]

Opb. O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown! The expectation and rose of the fair state, Th' observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down, And I of ladies most deject and wretched, Now see that noble and most sov'reign reason, Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh. O woe is me!

I have seen what I have seen, seeing what I see!

[Exit.]

Enter King and Polonius.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend; For what he spake, tho' it lack'd form a little, Was not like madness.

He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute.
What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well:

But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen-mother all alone entreat him

To shew his grief; let her be round with him; And I'll be plac'd (so please you) in the ear Of all their conference: if she find him not, To England send him, or confine him where Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so;

Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[Exit.]

Enter Hamlet and three Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly from the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. And do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O! it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious perriwig-pated fellow tear a passion to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shews and noise: I would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-Herods Herod. Pray you avoid it.

Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame, neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing so o'erdone, is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. O, there be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it prophanelly, that, neither having the action of Christian, nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

Play. I hope we have reformed that indifferently, with us.

Ham. O reform it altogether: and let those that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shews a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.

What, ho! Horatio!

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Here, my lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man, As e'er my conversation met withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord!

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee?
Thou hast no revenue, but thy good spirits,
To feed and cloath thee.
Dost thou hear?

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been,
As one, in suffering all, hast suffer'd nothing;
Give me the man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core; ay, in my heart of hearts,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.
There is a play, to-night, before the king;

One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee, of my father's death:
I prythee, when thou seest that act on foot,
E'en with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle: if then his occult guilt
Do not itself discover in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen.
Give him needful note;

For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
And after, we will both our judgments join,
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. I will, my lord.

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, and Gentlemen.

Ham. They are coming to the play, I must be
Get you a place. [*Idle:*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, faith,
Of the camelion's dish I eat, the air;
Promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet;
These words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor now mine, my lord—
You play'd once in the university, you say?

[*To Polonius.*

Pol. That I did, my lord, and was accounted a
very good actor.

Ham. What did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar. I was kill'd i'th'
capitol. Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part in him, to kill so capi-
tal a calf there—
Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord, they wait upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more at-

Pol. O ho, do you mark that? [*tracitive.*

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Your only jig-maker! what should a man
do but be merry? for look you, how chearfully my
mother looks, and my father died within these two
hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? nay, then let the devil wear black,
for I'll have a suit of fables. O heavens! die two
months ago, and not forgotten yet! then there's
hope a great man's memory may out-live his life
half a year; but he must build churches then.

Oph. What means the play, my lord?

Ham. It is miching Mallico; it means mischief.

Oph. But what's the argument?

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow:

The players cannot keep secret; they'll shew all.

Oph. Are they so good at shew, my lord?

Ham. Aye, at any shew, that you will shew them:
be not you ashamed to shew, and they will not blush
to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught; I'll mark
the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this the prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord,

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter Player King and Queen.

Pl. King. Full thirty times has Phœbus' car gone
round,

Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands
Unite, infolding them in sacred bands.

Pl. Queen. So many journies may the sun and
moon

Make us again count o'er, ere love be done.

But woe is me, you are so sick of late,

And so far different from your former state,

That I distrust; yet, though I distrust,

Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must.

Now what my love is, proofs have made you know;

And as my love is great, my fear is so:

Where love is great, the smallest doubts are fear;

Where little fear grows great, great love grows
there.

Pl. King. I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My working powers their functions leave to do;

But thou shalt live in this fair world behind,

Honour'd, belov'd; and haply one as kind,

For husband shalt thou—

Pl. Queen. O, confound the rest!

Such love must needs be treason in my breast;

In second husband let me be accurst!

None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood! [*Speak;*

Pl. King. I do believe you think what now you

But what we do determine, oft we break;

What to ourselves in passion we propose,

The passion ending, doth the purpose lose:

Think still thou wilt no second husband wed;

But thy thoughts die, when thy first lord is dead.

Pl. Queen. Nor earth, oh! give me food, nor
heaven light,

Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!

Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,

If once I widow be, and then a wife!

Ham. If she should break it, now—

Pl. King. 'Tis deeply sworn—sweet, leave me
here, awhile;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile

The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

Pl. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain,

And never come mischance between us twain!

[*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you the play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? is there no
offence in't?

Ham. No, they do but jest; poison in jest—
no offence.

King. What do they call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap: marry, how? tropically.

This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna.
Gonzago is the king's name, his wife Baptista; you
shall see anon, 'tis a knavish piece of work; but
what of that? your majesty and we have free souls,
it touches us not: let the galled jade winch, our
withers are unwrung.

Enter Lucianus.

—This is one Lucianus, nephew to the Duke.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love,
If I could see the puppets dallying—Come, begin,
murderer; leave thy damnable faces, and begin.
The croaking raven doth bellow forth revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
time agreeing,

Confed'rate season, and no creature seeing;

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's bane, thrice blasted, thrice infected;

Thy nat'ral magic and dire property,

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into his ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i'th' garden, for his estate;
his name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and writ-

ten in very choice Italian: you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

King. Give me some lights: away!

Pol. Give over the play. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.*]

Ham. Why let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungall'd go play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

Thus runs the world away.

—O, good Horatio, I'd take the ghost's word for a thousand pounds. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Come, some music: the recorders.

[*Exit Horatio.*]

Enter Rosencraus and Guildenstern.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king—Sir.

Ham. Ay, Sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, Sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom would shew itself richer to signify this to the doctor; for me to put him to his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my business.

Ham. I am tame, Sir, pronounce.

Guil. The queen your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. Sir, you are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's command; if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of the business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Ros. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you, a wholesome answer: my wit's diseased. But, Sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or rather, as you say, my mother.

Ros. Then thus she says; your behaviour of late hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O, wonderful son, that can thus astonish a mother! But is there no sequel, at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Ros. She desires to speak to you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any farther trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do so still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is the cause of your distemper? You do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself, for your succession in Denmark?

Enter Horatio, with Recorders.

Ham. Ay, Sir, but while the grass grows—the proverb is something musty.—Oh, the recorders! why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. Oh, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb; give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most excellent music: look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony. I have not the skill.

Ham. Why look you, now, how unworthy a thing you make of me; you would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note, to the top of my compass; and there is much music; excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sdeath! do you think I'm easier to be play'd on, than a pipe? call me what instrument you will, tho' you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. 'Tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks 'tis like a weazel.

Pol. It is black like a weazel.

Ham. Or like a whale.

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother, by and by—they fool me to the top of my bent. I will come, by and by.

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night, [out
When church-yards yawn, and hell itself breathes
Contagion to the world; now could I drink hot blood,
And do such deeds, as day itself
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother!
O, heart, lose not thy nature! let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom!

Let me be cruel, not unnatural:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none. [*Exit.*]

Enter King, Rosencraus, and Guildenstern.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
For we will fetters put about this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. We will make haste. [*Exe. Ros. and Guil.*]

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Sir, he is going to his mother's closet;
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him
And, as you said, and wisely was it said, [home,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
Their speech. Fare you well, my liege;
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I hear.

[*Exit.*]

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

Oh! my offence is rank, it smells to heav'n;
It hath the primal, eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder. Pray I cannot,
Tho' inclination be as sharp as 'twill,
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heav'n's,
To wash it white as snow? whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
Then I'll look up:

My fault is past. But oh! what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!

That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder!
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain th' offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling; there the action lies
In its true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,
E'en to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What, then! what rests!
Try what repentance can: what can it not!
Yet what can it, when one cannot repent!
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels! make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and hearts with strings of
Be soft as finews of the new-born babe. [steel,
All may be well. [Exit.

Enter Queen and Polonius.

Pol. He will come straight, look you lay home to him;
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your Grace hath stood between
Much heat and him. I'll here conceal myself;
Pray you be round with him.

Queen. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*Pol. exit behind the arras.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked one.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so;

You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And, would it were not so! you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, sit you down; you shall not
You go not, till I set you up a glass, [budge;
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me? Help, ho!

Pol. What ho, help! [*Behind the arras.*

Ham. How now, a rat! dead for a ducat, dead.

[*Kills Pol.*

Pol. O! I am slain.

Queen. What hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not: is it the King?

Queen. O what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed; almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[*To Pol.*

I took thee for thy betters; take thy fortune:

Thou find'st, to be too busy is some danger.—

Leave wringing of your hands: peace, sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not braz'd it so,

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dost wag thy
In noise so rude against me? [tongue,

Ham. Such an act,

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there: makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths: oh, such a deed!
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words.
Ah me! that act!

Queen. Ah me! what act?

Ham. Look here upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers;
See what a grace was seated on this brow,
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten or command;
A station like the herald Mercury,
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband—Look now what follows:
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The heyday of the blood is tame, 'tis humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step, from this to this?
O shame, where is thy blush?

Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutiny in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an incestuous bed—

Queen. No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain!

A slave, that's not the twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent lord: a vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket.

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious

Queen. Alas! he's mad. [figure?

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command? O

Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation [say!

Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

But look! amazement on thy mother sits:

O step between her and her fighting soul!

Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.

Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, Madam?

Queen. Alas! how is't with you;

That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' incorporeal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep.

Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him!—look you how pale he
glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. Don't look upon me,

Left with this piteous action you convert

My stern effects; then what I have to do,

Will want true colour, tears perchance for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that's here I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves. [away!]

Ham. Why look you there; look, how it stalks
My father in his habit as he liv'd;
Look where he goes, even now, out at the portal.

[Exit Ghost.]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain.

Ham. My pulse, as yours, doth temp'rately keep
time,

And make as healthful music: 'tis not madness
That I have utter'd; bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Cannot do. Mother, for the love of grace,
Lay not this flatt'ring unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks;
Confess yourself to Heav'n, repent what's past,
Avoid what is to come.

Queen. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart.

Ham. Then throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night, but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
Once more, good night!

And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

[Pointing to Pol.]

I do repent; but heav'n has pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him; so again, good night!
I must be cruel, only to be kind;
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.



A C T IV.

SCENE I. A Royal Apartment.

Enter King and Queen.

King. **T**HERE's matter in these sighs,
You must expound them:
How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both con-
Which is the mightier; in his lawless fit, [tend
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, A rat!
And in his brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.
Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd.

King. Gertrude, come away;
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both count'nance and excuse—Ho, Guildenstern!

Enter Rosencraus and Guildenstern.

Friends both, go join you with some farther aid;
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet he hath dragg'd him:
Go seek him out, speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel; I pray you haste in this.
Come, Gertrude. [Exit.]

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Safely stow'd.

[Within. Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!]

Ham. What noise? Who calls Hamlet?

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the
dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with the dust, whereto it
is akin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not my
own; besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what
replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, Sir, that soaks up the king's countenance,
his rewards, his authorities: but such officers do the
king best service in the end; he keeps them like
an apple in the corner of his jaw, first mouth'd; to
be last swallow'd: when he needs what you have
glean'd, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you
shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it; a knavish speech sleeps in
a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body
is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. Bring me to him. [Exit.]

Enter King and Gentlemen.

King. How dang'rous is it, that this man goes
loose!

Yet must we not put the strong law upon him;
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 'tis so, th' offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Delib'rate pause: diseases desperate grown,
By desperate appliances are reliev'd,
Or not at all.

Enter Rosencraus and Guildenstern.

King. How now? What hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord, guarded, to know your

King. Bring him before us. [pleasure.]

Ros. Hoa, bring in the Lord Hamlet.

Enter Hamlet and Guards.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten;
a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at
him.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your
messenger find him not there, seek him i' th' other
place yourself: but indeed, if you find him not
within this month, you shall nose him as you go up
stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come.

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Must send thee hence;
Therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind fits fair,
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them; but come,
for England: Farewel, dear mother!

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother are man
and wife; man and wife are one flesh; and so my

mother. Farewel, mother! Come, for England!
[Exit.]

King. Follow him,
Tempt him with speed aboard;
Away, for every thing is seal'd and done, [aught,
And, England! if my present love thou hold'st at
Let it be testify'd in Hamlet's death. [Exit.]

Enter Queen, Horatio, and a Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate,
Indeed distracted, and deserves your pity.

Queen. I will not speak with her. [may strew

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoke with, for she
Dang'rous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in.

Enter Ophelia.

Opp. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia?

Opp. [Sings.] *How should I your true-love know
from another one?*

By his cockle-bat and staff, and his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas! sweet lady, what imports this song?

Opp. Say you? nay, pray you mark:

He is dead and gone, lady, he is dead and gone;

At his bead a grass-green turf, at his heels a stone.

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia.

Opp. Pray you mark.

White his shroud as mountain snow,

Larded all with sweet flowers,

Which bewept to the grave did go

With true love-flowers.

Enter King.

Queen. Alas! look here, my lord!

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Opp. Well, God yield you! they say the owl was
a baker's daughter. We know what we are, but
we know not what we may be.

King. Conceit upon her father.

Opp. Pray let's have no words of this; but when
they ask you what it means, say this:

To-morrow is St. Valentine's day, [Sings.

All in the morn betime;

And I a maid at your window,

To be your Valentine.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Opp. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an
end on't.

*Then up he arose, and don'd his cloaths, and ope'd his
chamber-door,*

Let in the maid, that out a maid never departed more.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Opp. I hope all will be well; we must be pa-
tient; but I cannot chuse but weep, to think they
should lay him i' th' cold ground: my brother shall
know of it, and so I thank you for your good
counsel.

Come, my coach; good night, ladies, good night;
Sweet ladies, good night, good night.

King. Follow her close, give her good watch, I
pray you.

This is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. [A noise within.]

Enter Gentlemen.

Gent. Save yourself, my lord.

Young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'er-bears your officers; the rabble call him lord;
They cry, Chuse we Laertes for our king:

Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king! [A noise within]

Laer. [Within.] Where is the king? Sirs, stand
you all without.

Enter Laertes.

O thou vile king! give me my father,

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes. [me bastard,

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm, proclaims
Cries cuckoo to my father, brands the harlot,
E'en here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude: do not fear our person;
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason dares not reach at what it would.
Let him go, Gertrude.

Laer. Where's my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill. [with.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
To this point I stand,

That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what will; only I'll be reveng'd
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, nor all the world:
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Will you, in revenge of your
Dear father's death, destroy both friend and foe?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them, then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I owe my
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican, [arms,
Relieve them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a true gentleman.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensible in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment lie,
As day does to your eye.

Hor. [Within.] O poor Ophelia.

Laer. Let her come in.

Enter Ophelia.

O rose of May!

Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!

O heav'n's! is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as a sick man's life?

Opp. *They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier,* [Sings.
And in his grave rain'd many a tear.

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
It could not move thus. [revenge,

Opp. You must sing, down-a-down,
And you call him a-down-a. O how the wheel be-
comes it!

It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing is much more than matter.

Opp. There's the rosemary, that's for remembrance;
pray you, love, remember: and there's pansies,
that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness! thoughts and
remembrance fitted.

Opp. There's fennel for you, and columbines;
there's rue for you, and here's some for me. We may
call it herb of grace, o'Sundays: O, you may wear
your rue with a difference. There's a daisy; I would
give you some violets, but they withered all when my
poor father died. They say he made a good end.

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy. [Sings.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself!
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Opp. *And will be not come again?*

And will be not come again?

No, no, he is dead, gone to his death-bed,

He never will come again.

His beard was white as snow,

*All flaven was his poll;
He is gone, he is gone, and we cast away
mean?
And peace be with his soul, and with all lo-
vers souls.* [Exit.

King. Laertes, I must share in your grief,
Or you deny me right: go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me;
If by direct, or by collat'ral hand,
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give
To you in satisfaction: but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us;
And we shall jointly labour with your soul,
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so.
His means of death, his obscure funeral,
No trophy, sword, or hatchment o'er his bones;
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from earth to heaven,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall;
And where th' offence is, let the great ax fall.
I pray you go with me. [Exeunt.

Enter Horatio and Gentleman.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Gent. Seafaring men, Sir; they say they have
letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Hamlet.

Enter two Sailors.

1 Sail. Save you, Sir.

2 Sail. Here are letters for you, Sir, if your
name be Horatio, as we are informed it is.

Horatio reads the Letter.

"Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked
this, give these fellows some means to the king;
they have letters for him. Ere we were two days
old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment
gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail,
we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I
boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our
ship, and so I alone became their prisoner. They
have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they
knew what they did. I am to do a turn for them.
Let the king have the letters I have sent, and re-
pair thou to me with as much speed as thou
wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine
ear will make thee dumb, yet are they much too
light for the matter. These good fellows will
bring thee where I am. Rosenkrans and Guilden-
stern hold their course for England. Of them I
have much to tell thee. Farewel. HAMLET."
Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [Exeunt.

Enter King and Laertes.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance
seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Since you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he who hath your noble father slain,
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears. But tell me,
Why you proceed not against these crimes,
So capital in nature.

King. For two special reasons,
Which may perhaps to you seem weak,
But yet to me they're strong. The Queen, his
Lives almost by his looks. [mother,
The other motive,
Why to a public court I might not go,

Is the great love the people bear him,
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces.

Laer. And so I have a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleep for that: you must
not think

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime: you shall soon hear more.
I lov'd your father, and we love ourselves.

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet. These
to your majesty: this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet? Who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them—Leave us.

[Exit Mess.

"High and mighty, you shall know I am set
naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg
leave to see your kingly eye; when I shall (first
asking your pardon) thereunto recount the occasion
of my sudden and most strange return."

What should this mean? Are all the rest come
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing? [back?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. Naked!
And in a postscript here, he says, alone:
Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in't, my lord; but let him come.
It warms the very sickness of my heart,
That I shall live to tell him to his teeth,
Thus didst thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,
Will you be rul'd by me? [to a peace.

Laer. Ay, my lord, so you will not over-rule me

King. To thine own peace: if he be now return'd,
As liking not his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not chuse but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be rul'd,
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the instrument.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein they say you shine.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very feather in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy:
He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cry'd out, 'Twould be a sight, indeed,
To see Laertes match'd. The fencers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming over to play with him.
Now out of this—

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?

Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your
But to the business: [father,

Hamlet comes back; what would you undertake
To shew yourself indeed your father's son,
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' th' church.

King. No place indeed should shield a murderer,
Revenge should have no bounds; but, good Laertes,
Keep close within your chamber.

Hamlet return'd, shall know you are come home;
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame [gether,

The Frenchman gave you: bring you, in fine, to-
And wager on you heads. He, being remiss,

Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may chuse

A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father's death.

Laer. I'll do't;

And for the purpose I'll anoint my sword:

I bought an unction of a mountebank,

So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,

Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,

Collected from all simples that have virtue,

Under the moon, can save the thing from death,

That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point

With this contagion, that if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this:

I hav't—when in your motion you are hot,

And make your bouts more violent to that end,

And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him

A chalice for the purpose; whereon but tasting,

If he by chance escape your venom'd sword,

It shall be death.

Enter Queen.

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow: your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O where?

Queen. There is a willow growing o'er a brook,
That shews his hoary leaves i' th' glassy stream,
Near which fantastic garlands she did make
Of crow-flow'rs, nettles, daisies, and long purples:
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clamb'ring to hang, an envious siver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophe-
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet [lia,

It is our trick. Nature her custom holds,

Let shame say what it will. Adieu, my Lord!

I have a fire that fain would blaze,

But that this folly drowns it.

[Exit.

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.

[Exeunt.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter two Grave-diggers.

1 Grave. **I**S she to be buried in Christian burial,
when she wilfully seeks her own salva-
tion?

2 Grave. I tell thee she is; therefore make her
grave straight; the crowner hath sat on her, and
finds it Christian burial.

1 Grave. How can that be, unless she drown'd
herself in her own defence?

2 Grave. Why 'tis found so.

1 Grave. It must be *se offendendo*, it cannot be
else. For here lies the point; if I drown myself
wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three
branches: it is to act, to do, and to perform; *ar-*
gal, she drown'd herself wittingly.

2 Grave. Nay, but hear you, Goodman Delver.

1 Grave. Give me leave; here lies the water,
good: there stands the man, good; if the man go
to the water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nil
he, he goes; mark you that; but if the water
come to him, and drown him, he drowns not him-
self: *argal*, he that is not guilty of his own
death, shortens not his own life.

2 Grave. But is this law?

1 Grave. Ay marry is't, crowner's quest-law.

2 Grave. Will you have the truth on't? if this
had not been a gentlewoman, she would have been
buried without christian burial.

1 Grave. Why, there thou said'st; and the
more pity that great folk should have countenance
in the world, to drown or hang themselves, more
than we. Come, my spade; there is no ancient
gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-dig-
gers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 Grave. Was he a gentleman?

1 Grave. He was the first that ever bore arms.
I'll put another question to thee; if thou answerest
me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 Grave. Go to.

1 Grave. What is he that builds stronger than
either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 Grave. The gallows-maker, for that frame
out-lives a thousand tenants.

1 Grave. I like thy wit well: the gallows does
well; but how does it well? It does well to those
that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say the gallows is
built stronger than the church: *argal*, the gallows
may do well for thee. To't again, come.

2 Grave. Who builds stronger than the mason,
the shipwright, or the carpenter?

1 Grave. Ay, tell me that, or unyoke.

2 Grave. Marry, now I can tell.

1 Grave. To't.

2 Grave. Mafs, I cannot tell.

1 Grave. Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for
your dull ass will not amend his pace with beating;
and when thou art asked this question next, say, a
grave-digger: the houses he makes last till doomsday.

Go, get thee in, and fetch me a stoop of liquor.

[Exit 2d Grave.

In youth when I did love, did love,

Metbought it was very sweet;

To contract, O, the time for, ah, my bebove;

O, metbought there was nothing so meet.

Enter Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling in his business,
that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of
ease.

Ham. 'Tis even so, the hand of little employ-
ment hath the daintier sense.

Grave. *But age with stealing steps*

Hath claw'd me in his clutch;

And hath shipp'd me into the land,

As if I had never been such.

Ham. That scull had a tongue in't, and could
sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground,
as if 'twere Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first mur-
der! This might be the pate of a politician;
might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Did these bones cost no more the breed

ing, but to play at loggers with them? Mine ache to think on't.

Grave. *A pick-ax and a spade, a spade,
For—and a shroud'g sheet!*

*O, a pit of clay—for to be made,
For such a guest it meet.*

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities, now? his quillities? his cases? his tenures and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, firrah?

Grave. Mine, Sir—

O, a pit of clay, &c.

[Sings.

Ham. I think it's thine, indeed; for thou lyest in't.

Grave. You lye out on't, Sir, and therefore 'tis not yours: for my part, I do not lye in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lye in't, to be in't, and say it is thine; 'tis for the dead, and not for the quick; therefore thou lyest.

Grave. 'Tis a quick lye, Sir; 'twill again from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

Grave. For no man, Sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

Grave. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

Grave. One that was a woman, Sir; but, rest her soul! she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

Grave. Of all the days i'th' year. I came to't that day our last King Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

Grave. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that; it was that very day that young Hamlet was born, he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry! why was he sent into England?

Grave. Because he was mad; he shall recover his wits there; or if he don't, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

Grave. 'Twill not be seen in him there; they are all as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

Grave. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

Grave. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

Grave. Why, here, in Denmark; where I have been sexton, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'th' earth, ere he rot?

Grave. Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight or nine years: a tanner now, will last you nine years.

Ham. Why he more than another?

Grave. Why, Sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a fore decayer of your whorson dead body: here's a scull now, hath lain i'th' earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

Grave. A whorson mad fellow's it was; whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

Grave. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! he poured a flagon of rhenish on my head once: this same scull, Sir, was Yorick's scull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

Grave. Even that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him well, Ho-

ratio; a fellow of infinite jests; of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times: here hung those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft. Where be your gibes, now? your jests? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table in a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? Quite chop-fallen! Now get you to my lady's table, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this complexion she must come at last; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion, i'th' earth?

Hor. Even so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah. [Smelling to the scull.

Hor. Even so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses may we return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till we find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither, with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel!

Imperial Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole, to keep the wind away;
O, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw!
SCENE draws, and discovers the King, Queen,
Laertes, and Priest, with a Corse.

But soft, but soft awhile, here comes the king,
The queen, and all the court. Who's this they follow,

And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Destroy it's own life; 'twere of some estate:
Stand by, awhile, and mark.

Laer. What ceremony, else?

Ham. That is Laertes, a very noble youth.

Laer. What ceremony, else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd,
As we have warranty; her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'erflows the order,
She should in ground unsanctify'd be lodg'd:

For charitable prayers,
Flints and pebbles should be thrown upon her;
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin rites,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more;

We should prophane the service of the dead,
To sing a Requiem, and such rest to her,
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i'th' earth;

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministring angel shall my sister be,
When thou ly'st howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet, farewell!

[Throws in a garland of flowers.

I hop'd thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O treble woe

Fall ten times double on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deeds depriv'd thee of

Thy most ingenious sense! Hold off the earth a while,

Till I have caught her once more in my arms:

[Leaps into the grave.]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
T' o'er top old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. What is he, whose griefs
Bear such an emphasis? Whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand,
Like wonder-wounded hearers? It is I,
Hamlet the Dane.

[Leaps into the grave.]

Laer. Perdition catch thee!

[Grappling with him.]

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I prythee, take thy fingers from my throat—
For though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear—hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Ham. Why, I'll fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eye-lids will no longer wag.

Queen. O, my son! What theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Ham. Shew me what thou wilt do.

Wilt weep? Wilt fight? Wilt fast? Wilt tear thy-
Wilt drink up eisel? Eat a crocodile? [self?]

I'll do't. Dost thou come hither, but to whine?

To out-face me with leaping in her grave?

Be bury'd quick with her; and so will I.

And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground,

Singing his pate against the burning zone,

Make Ossa like a wart! nay, and thou'lt mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness;
And thus a while the fit will work on him:
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When first her golden couplets are disclos'd,
His silence will fit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, Sir?

What is the reason that you use me thus?

I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter—

Let Hercules himself do what he may,

The cat will mew, the dog will have his day. [Exit.]

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[Exit Horatio.]

—Strengthen your patience in our last night's
speech,

[To Laertes.]

We'll put the matter to the present push.—

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

This grave shall have a living monument. [Exeunt.]

Enter Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. So much for this.

Do you remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord?

Enter Osrick.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Den-

Ham. I humbly thank you, Sir.— [mark.]
Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a
vice to know him.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure,
I should impart a thing to you, from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, Sir, with all diligence of
spirit; your bonnet to it's right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, it is very cold; the wind
is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and
hot; or my complexion—

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord, it is very sultry, as
'twere I cannot tell how—my lord, his majesty bid
me signify unto you, that he has laid a great wa-
ger on your head: Sir, this is the matter—

Ham. I beseech you, Sir, remember.

Osr. Nay, good my lord, for my ease—Sir, here
is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an ab-
solute gentleman, full of most excellent differences,
of very soft society, and great shew: indeed, to speak
feelingly of him, he is the very card or kalendar of
gentry; for you shall find in him the substance of
what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gen-
tleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Ham. Of him, Sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence La-
ertes is.

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should com-
pare with him in excellence; for to know a man
well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, Sir, for his weapon.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Single rapier.

The king, Sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary
horses, against the which he has impawn'd, as I
take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their
assigns, as girdle, hanger, and so—three of the car-
riages are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the
hills, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal
conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Osr. The carriages, Sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the
matter, if we carry'd cannon by our sides.

Osr. The king hath laid, Sir, that in a dozen
passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed
you three hits; he hath laid twelve to nine, and it
would come to immediate trial, if your lordship
would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. Now if I answer, No?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your
person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall; if it
please his majesty, it is the breathing time of the
day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentle-
man willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will
win for him if I can; if not, I shall gain nothing
but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver it so?

Ham. To this effect, Sir, after what flourish your
nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship. [Exit.]

Hor. You will lose, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France,
I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the
odds. Thou would'st not think how ill all's here,
about my heart; but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord.

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of
boding, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will
forestal their coming hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury. [Exeunt.
Scene draws, and discovers King, Queen, Laertes,
Gentlemen, and Guards. Re-enter Hamlet and
Horatio.]

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand

from me. *[Presenting Laertes.]*

Ham. Give me your pardon, Sir; I've done you wrong;

But pardon't, as you are a gentleman: this presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd With a sore distraction. What I have done, That might your nature, honour, and exception Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness. Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil, Free me so far in your most gen'rous thoughts, That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house, And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfy'd in nature, Whose motive in this case should stir me most To my revenge.

I do receive your offer'd love like love, And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely, And will this brother's wager frankly pay. Give us the foils.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance Your skill shall like a star i'th' darkest night appear.

Laer. You mock me, Sir.

Ham. No, on my honour.

King. Give them the foils, young Osrick. Cousin Hamlet, you know the wager.

Ham. Very well, my lord: Your Grace has laid the odds o'th' weaker side.

King. I do not fear it, I have seen you both; But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: these foils have all a

Osfr. Ay, my good lord. *[length:]*

King. Give me a bowl of wine.

If Hamlet give the first or second hit, Or quit in answer of the third exchange, Let all the battlements their ordnance fire; The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath; And in the cup an onyx shall be thrown, Richer than that which four successive kings In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups, And let the kettle to the trumpet speak, The trumpets to the cannoneer without, The cannons to the heav'ns, the heav'ns to earth: Now the king drinks to Hamlet. Come, begin; *[Trumpets the while.]*

And you the judges bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, Sir.

Laer. Come, my lord.

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osfr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

[Drums, trumpets, and shout.]

Laer. Well—again. *[Flourish, a piece goes off.]*

King. Stay, give me the drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine. Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by a while. *[They play.]*

Come—another hit—what say you?

Laer. I do confess't.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. The queen salutes thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good Madam—

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I have, my lord; I pray you pardon me.

King. It is the poison'd cup; it is too late. *[Aside.]*

Ham. I dare not drink yet, Madam; by and by.

Laer. I'll hit him now. And yet it is almost

against my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third; Laertes, you but dally; I pray you press with your best violence, I'm sure you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so? Come on. *[Play.]*

[Laertes wounds Hamlet; then in scuffling they change rapiers; and Hamlet wounds Laertes.]

King. Part them, they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again.

Osfr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. How is it, my lord?

Osfr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock caught in mine own springe; I'm justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink—O my dear Hamlet!

The drink, the drink—I am poison'd. *[She dies.]*

Ham. O villainy! ho! let the door be lock'd: Treachery! seek it out.

Laer. It is here. Hamlet, thou art slain; No medicine in the world can do thee good; In thee there is not half an hour of life; The treach'rous instrument is in thy hand, Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practice Hath turn'd itself on me. Lo! here I lie, Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd; I can no more—the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point envenom'd too? Then, venom, do thy work. *[Stabs the King.]*

Here, thou incestuous Dane;

Follow my mother. *[King dies.]*

Laer. He's justly serv'd: it is a poison temper'd by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet; Mine and my father's death come not on thee, Nor thine on me! *[Dies.]*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee. Wretched queen, farewell!

You that look pale, and tremble at this chance, That are but mutes or audience to this act, Had I but time (as this fell serjeant Death Is strict in his arrest) O! I could tell you— But let it be—Horatio, I am dying. Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright, To the unsatisfy'd.

Hor. Never believe it:

I'm more an antique Roman than a Dane, Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup; let go, I'll hav't. O good Horatio, what a wounded name, Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind If thou did'st ever hold me in thy heart, *[me.]*

Absent thee from felicity a while, And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain, To tell my story.—O! I die, Horatio:

The potent poison quite o'ergrows my spirit; I cannot live to hear the news from England. But I do prophesy, th' election lights

On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice, So tell him, with th' occurrences more or less, Which have solicited. O—the rest is silence. *[Dies.]*

Hor. There crack'd the cordage of a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince;

And choirs of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Take up the bodies; such a sight as this Becomes the field, but here shews much amiss. *[Exeunt.]*

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